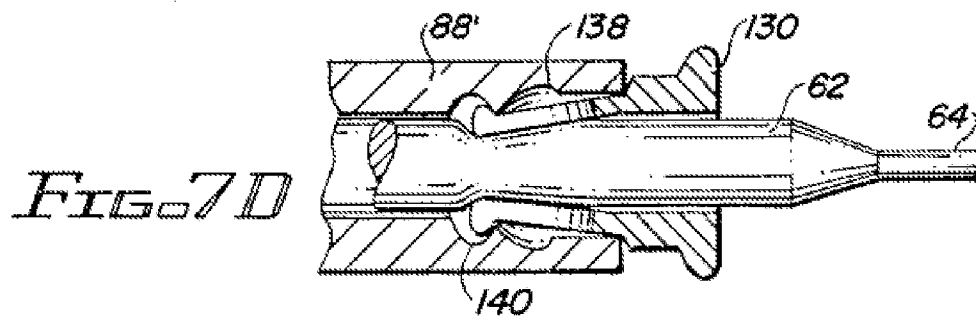
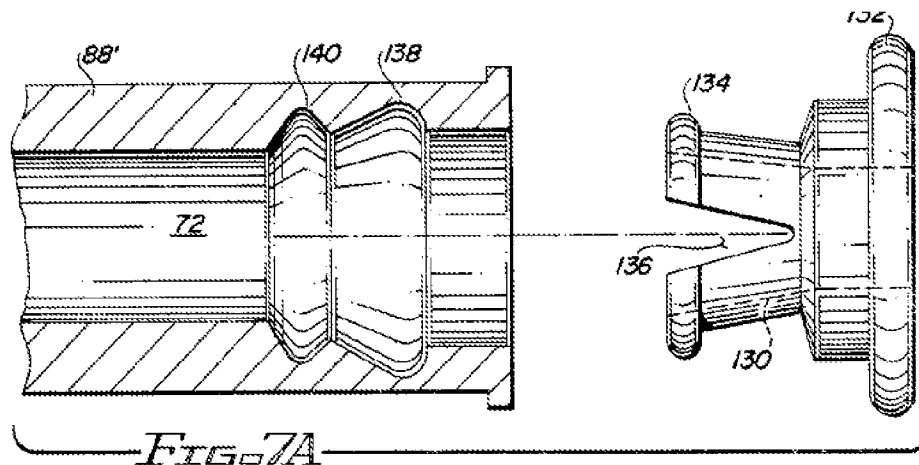


REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending. Claims 4, 8, 9 and 16 are allowed. Claims 7 and 15 are objected to.

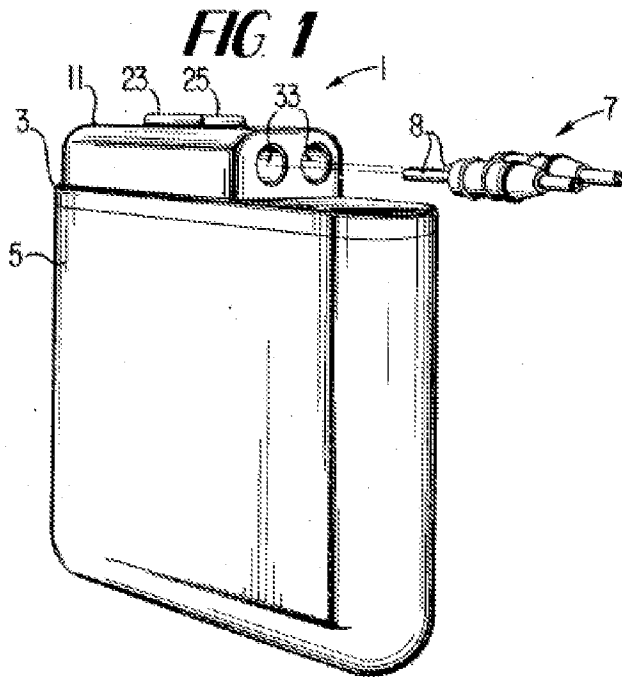
Claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 10-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Truex (US 4,934,366). The retention element identified in Truex is a collet 130 that is positioned co-axially with the lead connecting end 62, which is inserted into bore 72. The collet 130 serves as an axial plug to circumferentially grip and clamp end 62 within bore 72.



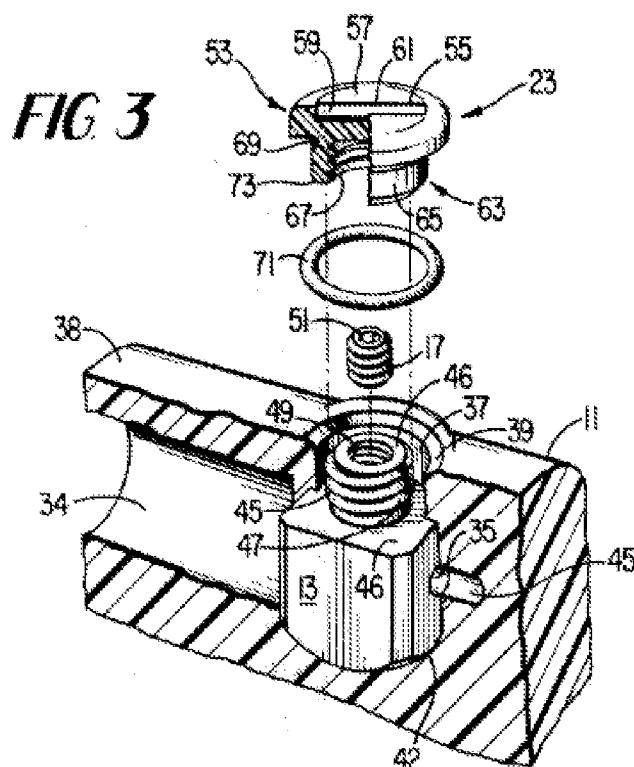
Truex fails to disclose a retention element that extends through an orthogonal opening in the sidewall of the connector module, wherein the retention element includes a flow passage that establishes fluid communication between the connector bore and the outer surface of the sidewall so as to vent

the connector bore to the ambient conditions outside the outer surface of the sidewall. Accordingly, amended claims 1 and 10 distinguish over Truex.

Claims 1-2 and 10-11 were also rejected as being anticipated by Kinney (US 4,262,673). Kinney discloses an implantable medical device (IMD) having a connector module 1 secured to the lid 3 of a case 5. Lead plugs 7 with terminal pins 8 are inserted into the bores 33 of the connector module.



Retaining screws 17 and 19 are screwed into threaded openings in the housing of the connector module to engage the pins 8 and secure the leads to the IMD. Sealing caps 23 and 25 seal the opening in the sidewall of the connector module.



The set screw 17 is driven into place using a hexagonal wrench. The sealing cap 23 has a notch for a screwdriver to drive it into position. The retaining member set screw 17 is solid and does not include a flow passage that establishes fluid communication between the connector bore and the outer surface of the sidewall so as to vent the connector bore to the ambient conditions outside the outer surface of the sidewall.

Amended claims 1 and 10 clearly distinguish over Kinney. Claims 1-2 and 10-11, as presented, cannot be anticipated by Kinney.

Claims 3 and 12 were rejected as being obvious pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based upon an application of Kinney as applied to prior claims 2 and 11. As discussed above, Kinney does not disclose the invention as set forth in amended independent claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 3 and 12 for obviousness is not viable.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 10 13, and 14 were rejected as being obvious pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based Ries (Pub. 2005/013481). The contention is that because the set screw 160 has a socket 170 that extends substantially the full length of the set screw, a flow passage is provided. The examiner cites to paragraphs [0082] and [0083], which refer to Figs. 9 and 11.

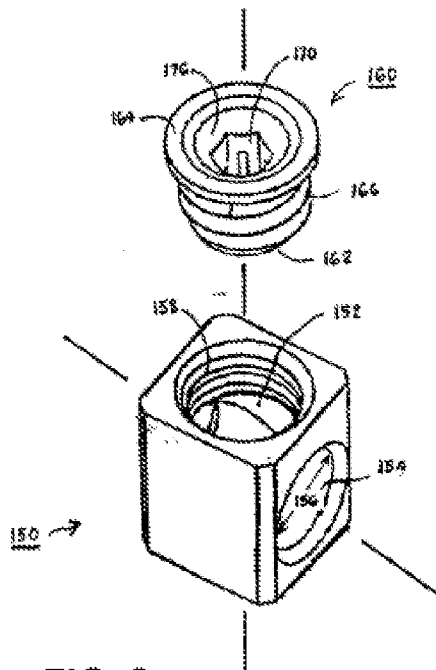


FIG. 9

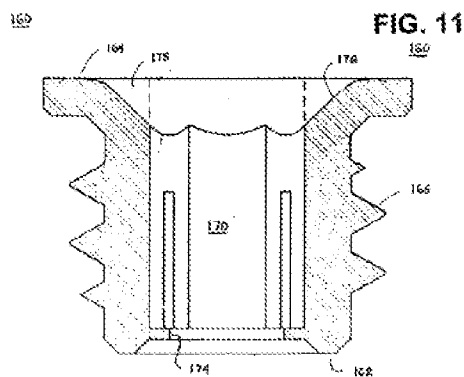


FIG. 11

However, amended claims 1 and 10 specify that the flow passage structure in the retention element extends through the retention element body between a tool

engagement portion at one end and a connector contact terminal engagement portion at the opposite end. This feature is illustrated in Fig. 2C.

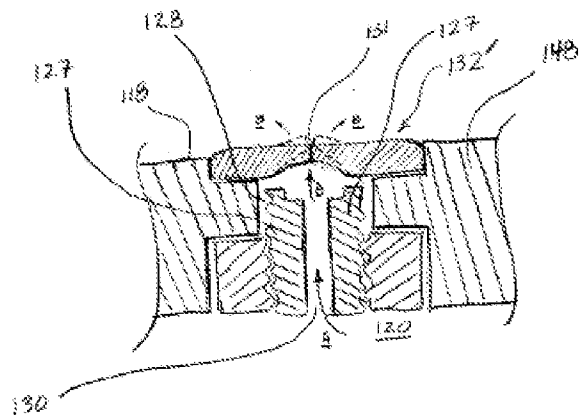


FIG. 2C

Because Ries teaches to have the socket (i.e., tool engagement portion) extend the full length of the set screw body, the structure defined in amended claims 1 and 10 would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art from the disclosure in Ries. Accordingly, the rejection of presently pending claims 1, 5, 6, 10 13, and 14 for obviousness is without merit.

Applicant is also submitting new replacement drawings in response to the objections made to the drawings. The drawings will be submitted in a Supplemental Response.

Applicant respectfully asserts that the present claims are in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

March 22, 2007
Date

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